



A STATE-BY-STATE REPORT: MASSACHUSETTS

Americans are worried about gas prices, health care costs, college tuition, and the continued war in Iraq. Republicans are ignoring these concerns and taking our country in the wrong direction - choosing instead to pursue issues designed to distract and divide. Democrats have a plan to take our country in a *new direction* to create economic opportunity and security for middle-class working families by ensuring access to affordable health care and energy, good jobs, and a secure retirement, and by putting an end to Bush's failed Iraq policy.

Republicans have mismanaged the war in Iraq and failed to make Massachusetts' security a priority.

- The Bush Administration's mismanagement of the Iraq war has inflicted a heavy toll on our troops - including the 14,056 brave Massachusetts men and women that have been deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan since 2001. [Dept. of Defense, 5/31/06]
- This has put a tremendous strain on families of the state's 6,794 National Guard and Reservists that have served in Iraq or Afghanistan - many of whom have been called up multiple times. [Dept. of Defense, 5/31/06]
- Here at home, Republicans in Congress have repeatedly failed to adequately secure our ports and borders and properly equip first responders in Massachusetts and across the nation.
- Democrats will transform failed Bush Administration policies in Iraq, the Middle East and around the world; require the Iraqis to take responsibility for their country; and press for the beginning of the phased redeployment of US forces from Iraq in 2006.
- Democrats will implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, ensuring Massachusetts police, firefighters and other first responders have the equipment and training they need.
- Democrats will pass a New GI Bill of Rights for the 21st Century to honor the sacrifice of Massachusetts' 490,883 veterans and ensure that they receive all the benefits they have earned and deserve.

Republican economy is moving in the wrong direction for Massachusetts' working families.

- Since President Bush took office, 102,900 manufacturing jobs have been lost in Massachusetts and 167,700 people are currently looking for a job. [BLS, 7/06]
- Today, the purchasing power of the minimum wage is at its lowest level in 50 years. [CPS; CEPR, 6/06]
- Instead of creating good paying American jobs, Republicans have provided billions in corporate tax subsidies for shipping jobs overseas and steadfastly refused to increase the minimum wage for nine years.
- Democrats will end tax giveaways that encourage companies to move jobs overseas and prohibit the Congressional pay raise until we raise the minimum wage to \$7.25 an hour for hardworking Americans. [EPI, 6/06]

Republicans reward profitable oil companies while Massachusetts families are paying record prices at the pump.

- Bay Staters are paying \$3.04, on average, for a gallon of regular gasoline - 101% more than when Bush took office in January 2001. [AAA, 7/06]
- Massachusetts families will spend an additional \$4,185,048,964 - \$1,802 per two-car family - on gasoline compared to 2001. [House Government Reform Committee, Dem. Staff, 7/06]

- Instead of working to bring down rising fuel costs, Republicans in Congress continue to push for billions in subsidies for Big Oil even as these companies report record profits.
- Democrats will fight price-gouging and end Big Oil tax subsidies; invest in alternative energy resources such as biofuels from the American heartland; and achieve independence from foreign oil.

Health insurance costs rise sharply in Massachusetts.

- Since 2000, health insurance costs for Massachusetts families have increased by \$1,141 - a 75 percent increase. [KFF; MEPS]
- During President Bush's tenure in the White House, the number of uninsured residents has reached 748,000 here in Massachusetts - up 228,000 since 2000. [CPS, 8/05]
- Yet the Republican leadership has failed to take action to lower health care costs for middle-class working families.
- Democrats will address health care affordability by fixing the Republican prescription drug program and making insurance more affordable for both employers and employees.

Cost of college soars for 439,245 Massachusetts students, federal financial aid slashed by GOP.

- In Massachusetts, the costs of attending a 4-year public college have jumped 49% and the costs of attending a 4-year private college have jumped 24% since fall 2000. [Dept. of Education, 2005]
- Today, the typical student borrower in Massachusetts now graduates from college with \$17,353 in debt. [Project on Student Debt, 2004]
- But rather than helping Massachusetts students, Republicans have made it harder to pay for college - cutting \$12 billion out of federal student aid programs.
- Democrats have a plan to make college more affordable for Bay Staters - expanding and simplifying tax credits for college tuition; expanding Pell Grants; and cutting interest rates in half on student loans, saving the average Massachusetts student \$5,550 over the lifetime of their loans.

Republican out-of-control record budget deficits are a tax on Massachusetts families.

- In five years, President Bush and Republicans in Congress have taken a projected 10-year surplus of \$5.6 trillion and turned it into record debt.
- President Bush has borrowed a staggering \$1 trillion from foreign nations - more than the previous 42 U.S. presidents combined.
- The net impact of Republicans' irresponsible economic policies is a debt burden of \$30,650 for a typical middle-income family of four in Massachusetts. [Citizens for Tax Justice, 6/06]
- Democrats have a plan to reduce the federal deficit and restore the tough fiscal discipline of the 1990s that helped spur record economic growth.

Republican plan to privatize Social Security puts Bay Staters' retirement security in jeopardy.

- Saving for retirement has become a real challenge for Massachusetts' working families.
- The Republican plan to privatize Social Security would undermine workers' retirement security by cutting Social Security benefits for the middle class and adding trillions to the national debt.
- This could hurt the nearly 1,066,957 Bay Staters receiving Social Security benefits. [SSA, 12/05]
- Democrats will ensure a dignified retirement for Massachusetts workers by stopping the privatization of Social Security, expanding retirement savings incentives and enact real pension reform to protect employees financial security from CEO mismanagement.

